

Today's News - Tuesday, April 16, 2013

EDITOR'S NOTE: We'll be preparing for the 2013 AIA Honors and Awards Luncheon tomorrow, so there will be no newsletter - we will return Thursday, April 18.

- ArcSpace brings us eyeful of MVRDV's Glass Farm in The Netherlands, TEN Arquitectos' hotel in NYC, and SANAA's Zollverein School in Germany.
- Davidson weighs in on the MoMA/AFAM controversy: "if the museum's architects can't figure out a way to use Williams and Tsien's ingenious stack of rooms, that is a failure of imagination."
- Capps offers a round-up of responses - and (not surprisingly) petitions launched to rescue the little museum building that couldn't.
- On a brighter note - our cheers, congrats, and huzzahs to Kennicott and InsideClimate News (two of our faves) on their Pulitzer Prize wins!
- Why cultural tourism is not a quick fix: be prepared to be brutally honest about what you have to offer.
- Bernstein parses the debate re: Madison Square Garden's future above Penn Station: the city "might never get another chance to undo 'the biggest planning mistake of last half century."
- Some Windy City musings as APA convenes in Chicago: SOM's O'Connor has a memo to civic leaders: "Get out of the way" if it is to actually become a megacity by 2025 - "we are not acting like a megacity in the making" because of years of "future-suffocating cancer of cautiousness," and "civic thinking that is mediocre and downright cheesy."
- Badger uses Chicago as focal point to ponder, "What happens to the Olympics Plans of cities that don't win them? Does a city get anything out of the exercise?"
- Booth gets behind RIBA's concern that changes in social housing standards "could exacerbate the phenomenon of 'rabbit-hutch Britain'" (of course, a builders' lobby group that says, ""The objective of all this is to cut red tape and reduce standards, not the other way round," bodes well, doesn't it?).
- Stott says if might be a good idea for the U.K. to take a page from Denmark's architecture policy: "Lesson #1: High Quality Design Makes Economic Sense."
- Lubell reports on bold plans for Alameda Square, which "could become the hub of L.A.'s burgeoning Arts District" (shipping containers included, of course).
- Wainwright is almost as dramatic as the dramas going on in the National Theatre's pop-up Shed: it "recalls a diminutive Battersea Power Station as if built by Amish barn-raisers - half packing crate, half temple - but it seems a natural addition."
- A profile of Architecture for Health in Vulnerable Environments (ARCHIVE) founder who's out to improve global health through better design: "paving floors can improve the cognitive development of a child by as much as 96%" (and other intriguing stats).
- Lui digs into the conundrum faced by "budding architects" and "a unique obstacle in starting their own firms - the prohibitive costs of design software" that could result in "a self-selecting pool of designers" who can afford to compete.
- McGuirk mulls OMA's "Tools for Life": "OMA designing hydraulic machinery for Knoll, sponsored by Prada, is the industrial revived not as tragedy but as farce."
- Heathcote riffs on two homes by Koenig and Gehry: "One is a clean, crystal-clear villa, the other is a tough, gritty street hood. And both remain hugely influential."
- Brooks Pfeiffer brings us an exclusive tour of FLW's Fir Tree House: "With its grandly rustic architectural elegance, it stands alone in Wright's oeuvre" (we want one!).
- Ron Thom and Douglas Cardinal take home RAIC | Architecture Canada's Prix du XXe siècle, which honors enduring excellence in Canadian architecture.

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-- MVRDV: Glass Farm, Schijndel, The Netherlands
-- TEN Arquitectos: Hôtel Americano, New York, New York -- Enrique Norten; MCH Arnaud Montigny
-- SANAA: The Zollverein School, Essen, Germany

It's a Form of Betrayal for MoMA to Tear Down the American Folk Art Museum Building: ...if the museum's architects can't figure out a way to use Williams and Tsien's ingenious stack of rooms, that is a failure of imagination. By Justin Davidson -- Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects- New York Magazine

Folk Implosion: The design community, including architects Tod Williams and Billie Tsien, are responding to MoMA's decision to demolish the former American Folk Art Museum. Some of those responses are outraged...More than one petition is now circulating to rescue the Folk Art building as a result. By Kriston Capps - Architect Magazine

Philip Kennicott wins Pulitzer Prize for criticism: ...has written elegantly and incisively about art and architecture...entry included...a review in June of an exhibit of creations by Kevin Roche at the National Building Museum...other winners [include] InsideClimate News...- Washington Post

Why cultural tourism is not a quick fix: Cultural tourism is about people and partnerships, good leaders and ace collaborators; without them, it's just another short-lived marketing gimmick...depends on brutal honesty about your offering,... By Helen Palmer- Guardian (UK)

Where Will the Garden Go? As the New York City Planning Commission debates Madison Square Garden's future above Penn Station, a Municipal Art Society competition calls for designs to re-envision both...the commission might never get another chance to undo "the biggest planning mistake of last half century." By Fred A. Bernstein -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Santiago Calatrava; SHoP Architects; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Vishaan Chakrabarti; Robert Yaro/Regional Plan Association- Architectural Record

Memo to Chicago's civic leaders: Get out of the way: ...the only city in the developed world...that will become a megacity by 2025. But we are not acting like a megacity in the making...What I have watched over the past number of years is a future-suffocating cancer of cautiousness...developed simultaneously with civic thinking that is mediocre and downright cheesy. By Paul O'Connor/Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM)- Crain's Chicago Business

What Happens to the Olympics Plans of Cities That Don't Win Them? More importantly: Does a city get anything out of the exercise? Chicago is unlikely to ever want to build..venues in some other context...Another unsuccessful city, though, might find more civic improvements worth salvaging...The one exception could be the Olympic Village...Chicago will still inevitably redevelop the area around Michael Reese...this vision could come in handy. By Emily Badger -- Sean Kinzie/Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)- The Atlantic Cities

Social housing standards review could 'worsen rabbit-hutch Britain': As MPs vote on loosening planning rules for private homes, RIBA warns social housing review could result in people living without enough space or light. By Robert Booth- Guardian (UK)

4 Lessons the UK Should Take from Denmark: ...a review of the country's architecture policy..."will be a rallying point for the profession"...Lesson #1: High Quality Design Makes Economic Sense...it remains to be seen whether the review will generate any noticeable changes at all. By Rory Stott -- Terry Farrell; Thomas Heatherwick; Alison Brooks; Alain de Botton- ArchDaily

Fashionable Arrival: Alameda Square could become the hub of LA's burgeoning Arts District: ...includes the redevelopment of four 1916 factory buildings...at 1.5 million square feet...scheme is flexible...campus could stay relatively small or keep expanding...while uses within each building could change. By Sam Lubell -- Shimoda Design Group [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

The National Theatre's pop-up Shed is a model for the South Bank's future: Haworth Tompkins' bright red timber auditorium learns from the nimble speed and agility of theatre production itself...The Shed...recalls a diminutive Battersea Power Station as if built by Amish barn-raisers...half packing crate, half temple – but it seems a natural addition... By Oliver Wainwright- Guardian (UK)

Architect works to save lives by improving design: Peter Williams founded Architecture for Health in Vulnerable Environments (ARCHIVE) to improve global health through better design...about to start work in Nepal, "based on findings that paving floors can improve the cognitive development of a child by as much as 96%..." - Minnesota Public Radio (MPR)

Unexpected Costs: Big ticket design software versus alternate methodologies: Budding architects face a unique obstacle in starting their own firms firms in the prohibitive costs of design software...could be resulting in a self-selecting pool of designers who are able to compete...we need to develop an awareness of the fact that architecture is affected by the tools of its production at all scales. By Ann Lui- Archinect

OMA's "Tools for Life": Sizing up the firm's new collection for Knoll at the Milan furniture fair: A photograph of Rem Koolhaas...trying to look poised with both feet dangling in the air...OMA designing hydraulic machinery for Knoll, sponsored by Prada, is the industrial revived not as tragedy but as farce. By Justin McGuirk [slide show]- Architectural Record

West Coast: pure cool v crack house: Two homes, by Pierre Koenig and Frank Gehry, embody different aspects of Los Angeles cool...One is a clean, crystal-clear villa, the other is a tough, gritty street hood. And both remain hugely influential. By Edwin Heathcote (from "The Meaning of Home") [images]- Financial Times (UK)

Wright Rediscovered: Exclusive: a tour inside a Frank Lloyd Wright house in the Southwest reveals the power of the original interiors, never before published...With its grandly rustic architectural elegance, the Fir Tree House stands alone in Wright's oeuvre. By Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer -- Pamela Duncan [slide show]- Architectural Record

Prix du XXe siècle honours enduring excellence in Canadian architecture: RAIC | Architecture Canada, in partnership with the Heritage Canada Foundation (HCF), is honouring two iconic post-secondary buildings...Grande Prairie Regional College and Massey College. -- Ron Thom (with Thompson, Berwick & Pratt, 1962); Douglas Cardinal (1974) [images]- Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC)

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